

Event: Colloquium

Location: University of Massachusetts

Dates: March 2-4, 2016

Title: DiskDetective.org Finding Homes for Exoplanets Through Citizen Science

Presenter: Marc Kuchner

Abstract:

The Disk Detective project is scouring the data archive from the WISE all-sky survey to find new debris disks and protoplanetary disks—the dusty dens where exoplanets form and dwell. Volunteers on this citizen science website have already performed 1.6 million classifications, searching a catalog 8x the size of any published WISE survey. We follow up candidates using ground based telescopes in California, Arizona, Chile, Hawaii, and Argentina. We ultimately expect to increase the pool of known debris disks by ~400 and triple the solid angle in clusters of young stars examined with WISE, providing a unique new catalog of isolated disk stars, key planet-search targets, and candidate advanced extraterrestrial civilizations. Come to this talk to hear the news about our latest dusty discoveries and the trials and the ecstasy of launching a new citizen science project. Please bring your laptop or smartphone if you like!